



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2009

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Shuster Honors Everett Company for Exporting Efforts

Washington, DC - **Congressman Bill Shuster** today presented Vacuum Processes, Inc. of Everett with the U.S. Commercial Service's Export Achievement Award. The event took place at Vacuum Processes' facilities in Everett, PA.

The Export Achievement Award recognizes U.S. companies that have made their first export sale or entered a new overseas market with the assistance from the U.S. Department of Commerce's U.S. Commercial Service. Vacuum Processes is a complete turnkey design, manufacturing, service, engineering, research, and installation entity, which provides custom vacuum and thermal process equipment for various industries. With fewer than ten employees, Vacuum Processes actively pursues export opportunities, frequently participating in trade missions, trade shows, and regional trade promotion events.

"It is essential for small and medium-sized firms like Vacuum Processes to export in order to reach their maximum potential," said Shuster. "Vacuum Processes serves as an example of what can be done by a rural Pennsylvania company with the right entrepreneurial drive and assistance from community development groups and the federal government. Hopefully, other businesses in and around our region will follow their lead."

In March 2008, Vacuum Processes participated in the FirstEnergy sponsored Trade Mission to Mexico and Expo Manufactura 2008, an industrial trade show in Monterrey, Mexico. On the Trade Mission, Vacuum Processes was able to participate in the U.S. Commercial Service's Gold Key Service, which resulted in Vacuum Processes locating a Mexican buyer that provides steady sales to date.

Through the FirstEnergy Trade Mission to Mexico and with joint export counseling from the U.S. Commercial Service offices in Pittsburgh and Mexico and the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC), a Regional Export Network Center of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Center for Trade Development that provides export assistance to regional companies, Vacuum Processes was able to successfully renew their ability to penetrate the Mexican market.

"With the guidance of the U.S. Commercial Service and the SAP&DC, we were able to enter the Mexican market more quickly and efficiently than anticipated" said Vacuum Processes President John Swatkoski. "Through their support, our trade mission to Mexico was a great success. We were able to focus on meeting potential clients and building relationships, while they took care of the details."

“John utilizes all services and opportunities made available to him in order to achieve his export goals. Vacuum Processes worked diligently to enter the Mexican market and those efforts have paid off,” noted Tina Taylor, Manager of the SAP&DC’s International Trade Program. “It is always exciting to watch companies establish sales in international markets. SAP&DC wishes them continued success with future sales to Mexico and to other targeted markets.”

Jim Haas of FirstEnergy Economic Development added that "Over a decade ago, FirstEnergy formed a partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service to help provide export trade opportunities in Mexico, and Canada for customers in our service territory. Since then, more than 200 FirstEnergy customers such as Vacuum Processes, Inc. served by Penelec have participated in the Export Now program - and they have achieved tremendous results. Participants have generated more than 1,700 qualified sales leads, resulting in nearly \$50 million in projected first year sales. Our Export Now program serves to help us accomplish our goal of working to strengthen the economic base of our service area, and to support our valuable partners like Bette Slayton at the Bedford County Development Association."

“Vacuum Processes is a wonderful example of harnessing federal and state resources to grow and expand their market outside of the U.S., “ said Lyn Doverspike, Director of the U.S. Commercial Service in Pittsburgh. “We love recognizing a company that demonstrates a commitment to exporting.”

The U.S. Commercial Service is a U.S. Commerce Department agency that helps U.S. companies, particularly small and mid-size, sell their products and services globally. The Pittsburgh Office of U.S. Commercial Service is part of the agency’s worldwide network, which includes 108 offices throughout the United States and more than 150 offices in 80 countries. For more information on the U.S. Commercial Service, please visit www.buyusa.gov/pittsburgh or call 412-644-2800.

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